

## Serbia

Serbia, with a population of 6.9 million, has been advancing towards EU accession since 2012, when it received candidate country status. Despite some progress, Serbia still has three major hurdles to overcome: improving internal political dialogue and reforms, reaching a comprehensive normalisation agreement with Kosovo\* and ensuring better alignment with EU foreign policy. Although Serbia voted for Russia's suspension from the UN Human Rights Council, it has not applied any of the EU's sanctions on Russia. In April 2022, Aleksandar Vučić was elected for a second term as President, and the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) coalition, led by Vučić, won the parliamentary elections. Snap elections in December 2023 brought the SNS a larger-than-expected victory.

### Background

On 1 November 2023, Serbian President, Aleksandar Vučić, [dissolved](#) the parliament and scheduled early parliamentary elections for 17 December, citing demands from the opposition for snap elections. These were the third parliamentary elections in less than four years. Official results [published](#) by Serbia's Election Commission confirmed the strong popularity of both the ruling Serbian Progressive Party and of Vučić at its helm, with the SNS having won some 46.75 % of the vote. The largest opposition coalition, Serbia against Violence (SPN), won 23.66 %. The [elections](#) raised some concerns, both among international observers, including Members of the European Parliament, and opposition parties.

Democratic reforms are part of the [Stabilisation and Association Agreement](#) between the EU and Serbia that came into force in 2013. Serbia's accession negotiations began in 2014. Some 22 of 35 [acquis](#) negotiation [chapters](#) have been opened and two have been provisionally closed. Two separate chapters: 34 (Institutions) and 35 (Other issues) have remained outside the negotiation clusters, as the former will be discussed at the end of the negotiation process, while the latter includes the overall process of normalisation of relations with Pristina. Belgrade and Pristina have been engaged in [EU-mediated dialogue](#) since 2011, following the adoption of [UN General Assembly Resolution 64/298](#) in 2010. Encouraging developments included the March 2023 commitments made in Ohrid, North Macedonia, to implement the [annex](#) to the EU-mediated [proposal](#) of February 2023. The outcome of the dialogue will influence Serbia's EU accession process, as the Ohrid commitments will be incorporated into the 35th negotiation chapter.

As mentioned by the Commission's 2023 [report](#), the overall pace of negotiations will continue to depend, in particular, on the pace of rule of law and electoral reforms and on the normalisation of Serbia's relations with Kosovo. Serbia is not fully aligned with EU foreign policy. In February 2022, when Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia joined the EU in imposing [sanctions](#) on Russia, Serbia adopted [conclusions](#) voicing support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, but it refrained from applying the EU's restrictive measures.

### European Parliament position

Parliament adopted its [resolution](#) on the 2022 Commission report on Serbia in May 2023. It called on Serbia's new parliamentary majority to accelerate the country's alignment with EU policies and values. In October 2023, Parliament adopted its [resolution](#) on the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, where it reconfirmed its support for the EU-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina dialogue. In February 2024, it adopted a [resolution](#) on the situation in Serbia following the elections, deploring that the December 2023 elections 'deviated from international standards and Serbia's commitments to free and fair elections.'

\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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